

Only Christianity Is True, Part 2 - Romans 5:17-19 – December 4th, 2011

- Today's teaching will be part two in a series we began last week titled; "Only Christianity Is True."
- By way of introduction, I want to lay down some of the groundwork, as it were, so as to hit the ground running in this chapter deep in its doctrine.
- For the benefit of those who were not with us last week, you missed out on a sanctified scolding of sorts as it relates to our intellect as believers.

- Sadly, Satan has succeeded in the dumbing down of Christians, so much so, that for the most part, an intolerance of sound doctrine has set in.
- As I'm sure you're well aware this is a prophecy which provides graphic detail of what the church looks like in the lukewarm Laodicean last days.
- I say that to say this; don't acquiesce to Satan's devices and in so doing allow him to rob you of what God has for you in chapter five of Romans.

- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a moment, before we begin, as I let you in on the sanctified scolding that takes place on my side of the pulpit.
- What I mean by this is that for me as the preacher, I too cannot cower or falter in the face of a doctrinally deep passage like the one before us.
- Many a pastor, myself included, is tempted in a thousand different ways, to shy away from the deeper teaching the text requires him to preach.

Brian Orme in his article titled; "4 Popular Preaching Myths" had a most interesting take on this the myth that; "Deeper Teaching Equals An Academic Or Heady Theological Message." - "There's a lot of buzz about "deeper teaching" in the church today. The fact is, the definitions that church members and church leaders use to explain deeper teaching are typically not the same. Church leaders often equate deeper teaching with theological depth and academic delivery, while many church members define deeper teaching in terms of how the sermon impacts or convicts them personally. So, who's right? On this one, it's the audience. The depth of your sermon is not dependent on your academic sources but on your ability to penetrate, convict, and point out truth in clear and simple terms. We could argue about the simplicity of the preaching of Jesus vs. the complexities of Paul's epistles, but the bottom line is that "deeper" teaching should move us to "deeper" obedience. Academic sermons aren't bad—they're just not always deep. Deep sermons require an uncanny precision for building a clear biblical context while moving the listener to a provocative response. Paul summed up his preaching into two powerful points that change everything: Christ crucified." <http://www.sermoncentral.com/pastors-preaching-articles/brian-orme-4-popular-preaching-myths-1107.asp>

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 NIV (1) When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. (2) For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. (3) I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. (4) My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, (5) so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

- This is my posture as your pastor; like the Apostle Paul, I have resolved to know and preach nothing except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.
- I don't have to keep your attention with my oratory skills and my persuasive words, but I do have to stay out of the Holy Spirit's way so He can.
- Here's what I'm thinking; let's agree together, from pulpit to pew, to give the Holy Spirit permission to teach sound doctrine to our sound minds.

- Having established that understanding, we're now ready to tackle the text, allowing the Holy Spirit to be our teacher of these life-changing truths.
- In our study of verses twelve through sixteen, the Apostle Paul submitted the forensic evidence proving Christianity's truth beyond any doubt.
- The jury is no longer out, and the verdict is now in, that only Christianity is the truth, and all the other counterfeit religions are absolutely false.

1. It proves why I'm a sinner (Verses 12-13)

- The Apostle Paul demonstrates how all have sinned because sin and death entered the world vis-à-vis the first Adam, before the law was given.

2. It proves why I need the Savior (Verses 14)

- Paul ever so brilliantly connects the dots between Adam, and the second Adam to come; Jesus Christ the Savior would conquer sin and death.

3. It proves why salvation is a gift (Verses 15-16)

- Here, Paul ever so beautifully ties the bow of salvation around the gift of eternal life in that the trespass can't have the final word, the gift does.
- This truth is the belt that holds everything up. What I mean by that is, if salvation were not a gift, then it wouldn't be salvation but determination.
- In other words, if sin entered not through Adam, but through the law, then this would imply that with enough determination, I could keep the law.

- Furthermore, If I could keep the law, then that would mean that I could earn my way to heaven and thus I would not need to receive it as a gift.
- In effect I could pay for it, thus, it ceases to be a gift, and not only do I not need the gift, I don't need the Savior, actually I may need a lawyer.
- Here's another better way of saying it; "if Christianity, under the law, has now become a legal matter, then no longer will a child like faith matter."

- Instead of receiving and opening a gift as a child at Christmas, I'm unnecessarily arguing and pleading my innocence as an attorney in court.
- Suffice it to say; "if salvation is not a gift, then Jesus is not the Savior, and I myself am most certainly not a sinner in need of the Savior's gift.
- You'll forgive me for my laboring over this point, but I have to because it is so germane to our understanding of what we're about to see next.

4. It proves why Jesus is the only way (Verse 17-19)

- v17 He says if death reigned by Adam's sin how much more will we reign through Christ who receives God's grace and the gift of righteousness.
- v18 Paul says that consequently, just as the result of Adam's sin was condemnation, so too is the result of Christ's righteousness justification.
- v19 He says as through Adam's disobedience the many were made sinners so also through Christ's obedience the many were made righteous.

- OK, so how does this prove that only Christianity is true and only Jesus is the way? Because, only Jesus Christ conquered both sin and death.
- I defy anyone anywhere anytime to prove there's someone else other than the person of Jesus Christ Who died and rose again defeating death.
- I am keenly aware that you may tire of me saying this but neither Mohammed, nor Confucius, nor Buddha, died and rose again defeating death.

Sir Lionel Alfred Luckhoo said it best when he wrote that; "The bones of Muhammad are in Medina, the bones of Confucius are in Shantung, the cremated bones of Buddha are in Nepal. Thousands pay pilgrimages to worship at their tombs which contain their bones. But in Jerusalem there is a cave cut into the rock. This is the tomb of Jesus. IT IS EMPTY! YES, EMPTY! BECAUSE HE IS RISEN! He died, physically and historically. He arose from the dead, and now sits at the right hand of God."

- Back when my son Levi was only eight years old, our Buddhist neighbor at the time asked him; "isn't Easter about Jesus dying on the cross?"
- The Holy Spirit gave Levi the perfect answer, he said; "no, it's not about Jesus dying on the cross, it's about Jesus being raised from death."

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." NIV